

The Largest Flock of Pet Pigeons in Missouri.

He Never Sells His Birds, but Often Gives Them to the Sick or to Intimate Friends.

More Than Eight Hundred Make Their Homes in the Loft of Fancier Charles Killian in South St. Louis.



CHARLES KILLIAN

WELCOMING BACK HIS PHILIPPINE PIGEON

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

Few persons in St. Louis have ever heard of the workman lover of pigeons who lives on the river banks in South St. Louis.

Almost buried beneath a grove of willow trees, and a few rods from the river, is the tiny cottage of Charles B. Killian.

More than 800 pigeons make their homes in the sheds in the rear of his house. Five hundred of these fly at large, and at least 300 more are caged in the various coops.

Mr. Killian earns a livelihood by repairing and selling barrels. The raising of birds is mere pastime with him. He never sells or kills his pets, but often gives them to intimate friends and the sick of the neighborhood.

Adjoining his house are the hatching-rooms. Here at all times are to be found birds hatching their eggs. The female lays but two eggs and the young are called squabs.

An average of two pair of squabs are hatched each day, on this little pigeon farm.

The female assumes the main responsibility of hatching. She starts to set at dusk and remains on her nest until noon the next day. The male then takes the lighter task of sitting from noon until dusk.

It is remarkable with what clocklike regularity he then relieves his mate. The squabs are hatched in two weeks' time. Mr. Killian feeds his birds twice a day, early in the morning and again at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The flock shows their keen anticipation as the time draws near, and at the first handful that is thrown on the ground the air is darkened with their forms.

The whirr of wings suggests the approach of a storm. When a stranger shows himself at this time, the birds fly to the nearest buildings. It is amusing to note the curiosity of the little creatures as they form themselves with military-like precision, into rows along the eaves, and intently peer at the intruder.

Their food consists of corn, wheat and hemp seed. They are very fond of the latter, but it is too rich for constant feeding.



TAKING A SUN BATH

They will never leave a place where it is fed to them at intervals.

Sick birds are doted and well cared for. Mr. Killian is a clever pigeon doctor. His long experience has taught him just what to do to give an ailing bird. As with human beings, they should have many different kinds of diseases, and each one requires a different treatment.

Just as every well-organized community has a leader, or head, so have these birds. Brownie, a rather quarrelsome old warrior, has ruled the flock for the last eight years. He leads them in their flights, settles their disputes, and is the watchful sentinel at all times.

Candidates for the leadership must prove their fitness for the responsibility by a fierce battle with old Brownie. Though nearly 14 years of age, he has never been defeated.

Among the great flock are many particular favorites. Each of these is known by a name suggested by some characteristic of the bird.

Boo for instance is a big white male. When relieving his mate at his nest he frightens all enemies by uttering a deep guttural "boo."

Peggy received her name from the fact that one of her legs was lost. With her mate she was once given to a friend at Twelfth street and Allen avenue, where they were kept in a cage for a year and a half.

When released one day to fly around they at once returned to their old home.

The old owner came to get them, but after such devotion their old master found it impossible to part with them. Mr. Killian persuaded his friend to take away another pair.

Brownie, as his name suggests, was so called because of his color. Mosey, a half-bird, received her name from her habit of wandering about the house. Her mate has built a nest in a hanging lamp and there persists in settling on several marbles that Killian put there to satisfy him.

The bird whose death grieved Mr. Killian the most was Puddy. She was the mate of Brownie, and was so named because of her plumpness and funny little waddling walk.

Puddy had quite a history and was a well-trained bird. One of her tricks was to carry letters around the room. When told to get a white handkerchief she would take a red one, having been taught to do it wrong for the amusement of the onlookers.

Upon being informed of her mistake she would return it and bring the right one. A vaudeville actress once heard of her cleverness and came out to purchase her, but was disappointed to hear that money could not buy the pet.

Puddy's death so grieved her master that he has never again trained any of his pigeons.

Besides the pigeons, the Killian lofts shelter many other folk of feathers and fur. Thirty ring doves are caged in one shed. Tuk, the tame Plymouth Rock rooster, was hatched by a pigeon, dramatic comedy and stant attention, and will not eat unless fed



TUK WHO WAS HATCHED BY A PIGEON AND A VISITOR TO THE GROUNDS

from the hand. Human friends are his preference, and if left alone he will follow the members of the household around and noisily proclaim his pleasure.

One of the first places that a visitor is taken to is the cage of the Philippine pigeons. Mr. Killian brought a pair from the islands after the Spanish-American

War, and it was not long before the birds multiplied to many times their original number. They differ from common pigeons in color. The greater part of their body is white, with speckles of white on the wings and breast. On the head of the male is a parrot-like tuft of white feathers.

One lonely cander, three dogs and three cats help to make things lively at the little farm.

Killian was born in Illinois in 1868. Part of his life was spent in New York, and when 25 years of age he came to St. Louis. He has been a grocery clerk and a miner. For the last eight years he has been engaged in his present occupation.

LANDOR'S BRUSH PAID HIS WAY AROUND THE WORLD.

In Northern Japan He Lived for Four Months With an Uncivilized Tribe Called the Hairy Ainu, Concerning Whom He Compiled Historical Material and a Dictionary of Their Language.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

It is not generally known that Henry Savage Landor twenty years ago, when a boy of 18, left his home near sunny Florence, with a few coins in his purse and his possessions consisting mostly of paints and brushes in a pack, to tramp the world and pay his way by painting.

It was a romantic thing for a boy provided with a good home to do, and it is principally the romance of exploring odd corners of the earth that keeps him tramping the world to-day. His interest once whetted, he never lapsed.

He had entered the Florence University and Technical Institute of Engineers when 12 years old by special permission of the Italian Government, being under the prescribed age of entry, but on the completion of a course in engineering, art, for which he had shown a marked talent, drew him aside.

Accordingly he was sent to Paris, with great hopes for his future, to study in the atelier of Jules Lefebvre and Boulanger. But it was not to be.

It was then he returned home, and immediately leaving his parental roof, with his father's full confidence in his ability to buffet the world alone, sailed forth toward Spain, painting and sketching en route with fair remunerative results. From there he crossed to Morocco.

At Malta he reaped an unexpected harvest through his prestige gained by the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh commissioning him to do scenic and character paintings.

"I also painted portraits," said Mr. Landor, "and, working rapidly, was able to do one in a couple of sittings, frequently earning as much as a hundred pounds in two days."

"With a full purse I pushed on into Egypt, surprised at special success and earning more than I knew how to spend."

"I never have been an extravagant liver, which perhaps accounts for my good conduct, that has been able to suffer trying journeys and privations."

"I went to England and thence, inspired by early reading, to the United States, gathering a rich reward in portrait painting in New York, Boston, Washington and Chicago."

Determined on a tour of the world, Mr. Landor sailed from Vancouver for Japan. In Hokkaido, Northern Japan, he lived for four months with an uncivilized tribe called the Hairy Ainu, concerning whom he compiled much material and a rough dictionary of their language. For, without being a philologist, Mr. Landor is naturally a linguist.

He writes, speaks and reads equally well in German, English, French and Italian, and knows sufficient of sixteen other languages and dialects to experience no difficulty in conversation.

In Sydney, Australia, Mr. Landor turned his brush to good purpose by painting portraits of Henry M. Stanley, the Premier of New South Wales; Sir Henry Pargies and others.

Traversing Australia, he went to the South Sea Islands, Tasmania, Shot, Nepal



A. HENRY SAVAGE LANDOR.

and India. Making his abode in England, he took up his pen to recount his experiences, and again for a certain livelihood turned to art, to silver-point drawing, then popular.

"In two years," he continued, "I made more than 300 portraits, charging one guinea and upward apiece."

"It was then, principally for scientific purposes, I decided to explore Tibet, in which I was assisted by the Geographical Society of London, the British Museum of Natural History and similar societies supplying instruments for my use in return for observations."

It was that thrilling narration, followed by an interesting account, at short range, of the Chinese war, that gained for him a large circle of readers interested in strange sections and peoples.

Though of a nomadic nature and never so content as when on the wing, he finds much pleasure in his stock farm and vineyard, comprising upward of 11,000 acres, in Tuscany, which, in the care of able overseers, render him from the sale of live stock, grapes, olives, olive oil and wines a substantial revenue.

MAKING OF LUSCIOUS FRUITS

Seedless Apples, Seedless Grapes, Seedless Watermelons, Tomatoes or Potato Plants, Thornless Blackberries, Strawberries and Blackberries combined, Half Orange, Half Grape Fruit.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

Uncle Sam has a plant wizard, and his name is Herbert J. Webber.

For quite a while past, he has been engaged in the business of making new fruits and vegetables, and some of the things he has accomplished are little short of miraculous.

Only the other day he quietly handed to the Secretary of Agriculture an unfamiliar looking object, golden yellow and of spherical shape, which, he said, represented the long-sought cross between the Tangerine orange and the grape fruit, or pomelo.

He called it the "tangelo," and promised that before very long it should be on our markets commercially.

It tastes somewhat like an orange, but is more acid.

Here, then, was a fruit unthought of by nature, and created purely and simply by human ingenuity. What could be more wonderful? Yet it is only one of a number of similar marvels which have been recently evolved.

Burbank, the California plant breeder, has just announced the production of a new berry that is a cross between the raspberry and strawberry—a delicious morsel, which, as it melts on the tongue, conveys mingled suggestions of both of those fruits.

Doctor Webber says that the seedless watermelon is a reasonable hope for the not distant future.

Meanwhile the thornless blackberry is already an accomplished fact, having been produced recently at Benton Harbor, Me., and the "tit" has been eliminated from a new and promising variety of plum.

Oddly enough, in this plum the kernel remains, though the stone is gone, but this may be disposed of eventually by cross-breeding.

At present the experts are engaged in augmenting the size and improving the shape of the "stoneless plum," as it is called, in order that it may have as high a commercial value as possible.

There seems to be scarcely a limit to the wonders which may be accomplished in the line of experimentation in which Doctor Webber and his fellow-experts are engaged.

POTATO PLANT MADE TO BEAR TOMATOES

It has been ascertained recently, for example, that by suitable grafting the potato plant can be made to bear tomatoes above ground while producing its own tubers beneath the soil.

What a gain it will be to our farmers if in the future they find it practicable to raise crops of potatoes and tomatoes on the same areas of ground, one above and the other below.

These magicians who play such wonderful

tricks with plants have recently evolved a new kind of cherry tree, which seems to be the cherry tree of the future.

Instead of bearing fruit in the ordinary fashion, by twos and threes, it produces them in large and dense clusters, so that fifty or sixty cherries sometimes grow in a single bunch on a twig. The cherries, too, are big and of remarkably fine flavor.

One of the most notable of recent achievements in this line is the seedless grape, which has been successfully produced in California.

There is an excellent commercial opportunity for it, inasmuch as many people object to grapes on account of their seeds, and it is entirely from the fear of swallowing them, which has been mistakenly caused by the appendicitis fad.

Many of the finest varieties of grapes, especially those of the "meaty" sort, have very large seeds, which on account of their size are really objectionable.

If they can be got rid of entirely, that will be highly satisfactory; and one seedless grape having been secured, it may be confidently expected that there will be no lack of others.

The seedless grape was obtained from the muscat of Alexandria (imported from Egypt) by selecting year after year cutting from those vines which produced less than the normal number of seeds.

This process was continued from season to season until absolute seedlessness was eventually achieved. The special object in view was to get a main crop of large size. Everybody is familiar with the little dried grapes of Corinth, which are commonly known as currants; they are seedless, but have the disadvantage of small size.

The new California grape, on the other hand, will have flavor equal to that of the currant, while relatively a giant.

The seedless apple is likely to arrive in the near future.

The plant makers are working on the problem patiently. Indeed, that kind of work pays well, inasmuch as there is always a fortune in any seedless fruit. Fortunately, the banana is already seedless, and has been so for centuries, though nobody knows why.

BANANA IS A MODIFIED BERRY.

It is propagated by suckers, and possibly it had no seeds when it was first found in the wild state. The banana is a modified berry. Cutting the fruit down through the middle, you will sometimes see a few little brown spots, which are rudimentary seeds; but occasionally the banana does actually produce seeds.

The pineapple is nearly seedless, being propagated likewise from suckers and from slips.

Thorns are a nuisance on fruit plants, and the plant wizards are doing their best to get rid of them, the means adopted being simply to select for propagation specimens which by chance happen to be thornless or comparatively so.

In this way the raspberry is being freed of its thorns. Some oranges and lemons are very thorny, for example, the high-priced King orange, which is the best of the mandarins, though rarely seen in our markets.

In Florida its thorniness has been diminished by selecting buds from branches with few thorns, which are rudimentary seeds; but occasionally the banana does actually produce seeds.

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YUKON'S WEALTH IS STILL GREAT.

British Mining Expert Confident Output Will Last.

Tacoma, Wash., March 17.—William M. Fitzhugh, a well-known British mining expert, left for the Yukon, where he will be in charge of the American Alaska gold-bearing operations for an English syndicate. He is accompanied by Philip H. Blackwell of London, and Samuel Hale of New York.

Early last year Expert Fitzhugh investigated the chief producing creeks of the American Yukon, and on the basis of his report large investments were made in claims and hydraulic ground on Seventy-Mile Creek, Birch Creek and streams tributary to the Tanana River.

Under the direction of Mr. Fitzhugh large operations, employing several hundred men, will be started as soon as the summer season opens. Regarding the American Yukon Mr. Fitzhugh says:

"When I made my report in London on my return from the Yukon, many of the best mining experts in England thought I could not possibly be right. However, the report was productive of the investments, and the future will show that what I have said is correct."

As a mining engineer of experience, I report that the Alaska gold-bearing country will astonish the world. The output of American Alaska will last for many years to come, and will be far greater than any one to the present time has dared to predict.

"Some of us will live to see the time when the American Yukon will produce hundreds of millions of dollars in gold. The country is very different in character from the Klondike. It will not give out. The only trouble is that the people have not yet learned the way to work the gravel deposits, and to do this will take time."

"This was the history of California. When gold was discovered there in 1849 the miners knew they had it, but it was not until years later that they learned how to work it, and get the metal out of the ground."

"In time they learned, and then the California gold output increased so as to astonish the world. The same will be the history of American Alaska, and when this is accomplished there will be a permanent output of gold that will be far in excess of that secured by scratching at the present time."

"In many parts of American Alaska the gravel will run as high as \$2 to the yard for areas of twenty miles in extent, and, in fact, there is no telling just how much there is of this class of gravel. In time this will be ascertained, and the people engaged in mining there will learn how to work it."

"Then the country will be settled up, and the new methods will be employed in all districts. That is the day when the output of American Alaska in gold will astonish the world."

"Last year I spent June, July, August and September in the vicinity of Eagle City. I also visited other creeks for the purpose of ascertaining just what the showings would be."

"There was not a place visited where the proof did not exist of the richness of the gravel. The people I represent this year will conduct large operations on Seventy-Mile, Birch Creek and Tanana River."

"I do not think there is another part of the mining world that is so fortunately situated with deposits and means to work them as Alaska, and that part of the country on the American side is the best."

The Klondike has shown that it contains

rich deposits, while across the line the gravel is permeated with gold all over. There will be a population in Alaska some day that will be able to systematically work the whole country."

"I learned in London that the railroad from Valdez to Eagle will be built, when conditions are ripe. The properties I represent do not need a railroad, as they can be worked by hydraulic methods, and the product shipped out on boats."

The railroad is needed for developing other resources, such as farming and stock raising. Its construction will bring about a rapid development throughout Central Alaska."

Hazel's Two Husbands and What Became of Them.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

There is only one Finish for the deluded mortal who tries to work on a Day Schedule at the same time as the night shift of the Light District with the Night Shift.

He winds up as the Principal Attraction of a Daylight Function at which six of his old-time friends were met by a rapid development throughout Central Alaska."

Every one sends flowers, but he does not know how to acknowledge them.

Hazel looked very well in Black, but it was hard lines for her to wear the Indolite. She knew it would cause talk if she cut loose before the Grass was Green in the Family Lot, so she was pulling for an early Spring and plenty of Rain.

When she bought her Second Ticket for the Merry Go Round she was determined on one thing.

"The next one I pick out will not be tied down to any Office," she told herself. "I want a Man who can keep awake all Evening."

"I refuse to travel with Quitters. What we need in this country is to put Ginger into our Social Affairs are Gentlemen of Leisure who begin to get Good along about Midnight."

So she picked out a handsome Wretch of Good Family who never had worked a Moment in all his life and who hated the sight of a Bed.

His name was Bad Form for any one to suggest going home before Daybreak.

They went traveling together as soon as she had settled the insurance. When they arrived in a New Town he would go out to buy a Package of Cigarettes, and then he would return in three days to find out if everything was O. K. and if she was having a nice Time.

But you could say one Word to his Credit. He never interfered with any of her Arrangements for the Reason that when the Arrangements were being made he was Non Est.

He belonged to several Clubs at which the members removed their Pajamas to put on Evening clothes. Sometimes he met his Wife at Dinner Parties, and when he did so he showed every Consideration and asked her if she was still living at the same Place. He never forgot to be a Gentleman, even at a Dinner Party.

Although she saw him only about once a Week she always had this Consolation. She knew he was not working himself to Death in any Office, and I only wanted to have an idea of how much it was!

When she applied for a Divorce the Off-

cers had to Hunt a long Time before they found him.

He was very much pained, and said he had never used a harsh or cruel Word to her, because he always talked over the Phone, with Central Belling.

"She obtained a Decree, and as she was leaving the Court-Room she was met by a sympathetic Friend."

"What are you going to do next?" asked the Friend.

"I am going to buy a Dog," was the Reply.

MORAL: It is often necessary to try two or three before the Right Kind is Landed.

Stray Bits of Humor From School Children.

Odd "Written Excuses" Sent to Teachers—Quaint Answers Given by Pupils.

Here are some amusing "written excuses" sent to New York school teachers on behalf of delinquent pupils:

Dear Madam: Please excuse John for not doing his exercises. He cannot understand them. His mother would help him, only she cannot read or write.

His father will help him in the hereafter, only he is dead. Very respectfully,

ANNIE McGINN.

Another letter said:

My daughter was absent yesterday because she had the toothache, and Ous.

MRS. A. SMITHKINS.

This note may not have been so much of a mistake after all.